UNITY.

FREEDOM, FELLOWSHIP AND CHARACTER IN RELIGION.

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Special attention is called to Mr. Blake's paper on "Natural Religion." It is an actual letter written to an inquiring friend, and perhaps shows the principles of the liberal faith more clearly than a prepared article would.

Here is a curious coincidence in the subscriptions for UNITY. M. J. Miller, of Geneseo, Ill., preached, the other morning, on our motto, "Freedom, Fellowship and Character in Religion;" and as a result immediately obtained twenty-seven subscribers. The same day, and without concert between them, J. Vila Blake, of Quincy, Ill., preached on the same subject, and also obtained twenty-seven subscribers. Just as we go to press, Mr. Covell, of Buda, Ill., writes that he has twenty-seven subscribers there. With no leaning toward trinitarian doctrines, we still feel grateful for this three-fold repetition of the third power of three.

We hear much of the poverty of the early apostles, who were ordered to carry "neither purse nor scrip." But what was this compared with the poverty of the modern apostle, Archbishop Purcell, who owes nearly four million dollars more than he can pay?

Now that the Chinese question is settled for the present, the *Sacramento Union* (which ought to know) confesses that there have been "reckless misstatements," and says it were better "to tell the exact truth about the Chinese; and the exact truth is that we do not object to them on the ground of their immorality, or their heathenism, or their total depravity, but because they can underlive and underbid white men and women, and because they can grow fat and rich on wages that our people would starve to death on." Considering that their persecution in California seems to have been lately driving back the Chinese faster than they have come, we may trust that hoodlum clubs, even without the desired law, will be able to protect our Christian civilization against this heathenish irruption of industry and economy.

Even Dr. Talmage is working for unity. He preached last Sunday on "the evils of sectarianism," and said, "God hasten the time when all denominations shall join hand in hand, and recite the Apostles' Creed together." Probably, however, the true religious unity lies in some larger exercise than the recitation of the Apostles' Creed.

Not even the Congregational press always bears the marks of regeneration. O. B. Frothingham, lately speaking of the true course to follow in the present decay of religious forms, gave this beautiful advice: "The great thing is to be as sweet, as humane and as gracious as our human nature allows." And now, when this man, overworked, is about leaving America, the *Congregationalist* holds the sentence up to ridicule, saying: "Isn't it 'sweet' in him to let us know all about it?" Evidently there is need enough of Mr. Frothingham's advice, when even a professedly Christian editor can make his farewell word so sour as that.

Our High Church brethren have information from the other world which it behooves us to circulate. Rev. E. W. Spalding, D. D., Dean of All-Saints' Cathedral in Milwaukee, in a pastoral letter urging abstinence from social pleasures, dress, fashion, parties and balls, during Lent, shows how inconsistent it is "to go to places of amusement when your Saviour is going to His death, and that for you, and to 'find pleasure' when He is in agony." Whatever one may think of the doctrine of a God slain once, it begins to look serious for the world if He "is going to His death" every spring. Perhaps, however, a soul fatigued and worn by parties and balls into the necessity of a Lenten rest, can endure the thought,—at least if consoled and sustained by the hopes of a new Easter bonnet.

How good things rise in value with time! Jesus' life seemed worth little in his day; Judas is reported to have sold it for thirty pieces of silver, and there is no tradition that the evangelists bought fine residences by their story of it. But now Mr. Beecher is sued to the measure of $40,000 for failing to produce just the second volume.

Your editor lately read the following sentence in a letter to a certain heretical preacher: "Now, Bro. Jones, you know I don't sympathize a bit with you in your religious views as such, concerning Christ and Scripture; but you may always count on me as *very near you* in all the love and charity, all the earnestness and devotion of a human heart." This is almost as good as Carlyle's account of his strong and close friendship with John Sterling, in which they agreed in everything "except in opinions." Unity of the spirit is coming.

Conservatism is well illustrated by a story (found in the New York *Tribune* some time ago) of Bismarck walking with the Russian emperor in the summer garden of St. Petersburg, and finding a sentinel stationed on a lawn, with apparently nothing to guard. Bismarck inquired why he was there, but the emperor did not know,—nor did the adjutant, nor the officer of the watch. The military records were searched, but no explanation found. But at length an old man was discovered who remembered hearing his father tell that Catherine II. had once found a choice flower in that spot, and in order to protect it a sentinel had been placed there. The guard had been kept a hundred years after the flower died. It is quite certain that each of the thirty-nine articles once kept guard over some flower of religious sentiment which was sweet to the souls of our ancestors. When it shall be discovered that the flower has gone to seed, the sentinel will be removed.

At a recent prayer meeting, Mr. Beecher, reading a letter from a woman who feared she had committed the unpardonable sin, remarked, "That's biliousness—nothing else." He told of another woman half crazy with revival meetings and worrying over this sin, whom he advised not to pray, open her Bible, go near a church, nor speak about religion, for a week. One must rejoice at such symptoms of returning health in religion. But is the unpardonable sin, after making so many sermons and sufferings in the church, to be turned over to the physicians as mere derangement of liver and nerves? After weak women and children have been so long terrified by fancied sins against the Holy Ghost, it would be well to keep less sensitive souls reminded that there is a bit of the unpardonable in all actual sins against their neighbors, which no degree of vicarious virtue can quite atone for.

Perhaps it would be healthy just now to preach that the unpardonable sin is insincerity in religion. An able lawyer writes us of the many at church today who regard the doctrines and ceremonies as "pious frauds convenient for the season," and says, "many of my friends confess that they have deliberately committed mental suicide on such questions, rather than risk investigation and its results on themselves and on society. Such fundamental insincerity is ruinous to all moral and intellectual integrity, and permeates our whole life." Unless it can be stopped, he says, "we shall soon be divided into heartless philosophers on one side, and religious shams and canting frauds on the other, and society will degenerate and lose its vital principle." No doubt such insincerity is suicide of the mind and of the conscience too, and the source of far-reaching moral corruption. We need, just now, a church which preaches *salvation by sincerity.*

No better evidence of the progress of rational views in religion can be given than in Dean Stanley's own words at a reception of the Episcopal clergy in Boston last September. Speaking of the Bible, he said "the crude notions which prevailed twenty years ago on the subject of inspiration have been so completely abandoned as to be hardly anywhere maintained by theological scholars. Of the eleven thousand English clergy who set their hands to a declaration in favor of those crude notions fifteen years ago, there are probably not fifty who would now do it again." The theory of the composite character of the Pentateuch, which brought Bishop Colenso into such trouble, "is now in principle assumed almost as certain." Dean Stanley says the liberal theology ought not to stand in the defensive attitude, but "ought itself to claim an orthodoxy:" for the Bible and the best voices of christendom are on its side, asserting "the universality of the Divine love, the justification of the good heathens, the supreme importance of morality, the possibility of human perfection, the divinity of conscience, the identification of the church with the laity, of things secular and things sacred."

Geo. Wm. Curtis, in the last "Easy Chair," exposes the artificial sentiment of Lord Beaconsfield, who publicly called the death of the Princess Alice "a terrible calamity" which had "fallen on the country." He says, "this extravagant overstatement plainly resulted not from excess of grief, but from want of feeling." Still more did the unreality of the pathos appear in the House of Lords, when Disraeli, after narrating the affecting scene in which the Princess' mother had "received the kiss of death" from her boy, went on to "paint the lily." "My Lords," quoth the Premier, "I hardly know

an incident more pathetic. It is one by which poets might be inspired, and in which the professors of the fine arts, from the highest to the lowest branches, whether in painting, sculpture, or gems, might find a fitting subject of commemoration." "It is incredible," adds the Easy Chair, "but it is true, Lord Beaconsfield said it. That fresh and heart-touching sorrow presented itself to his mind as worthy to be cut on shell, and perpetuated in cameo, mounted properly, of course, in frosted gold of a unique Assyrian pattern, and worn as a brooch on the bosom of the Empress-Queen." Mr. Curtis suggests that this speech, "most seriously meant," may illustrate "the whole Beaconsfield business," which "is a business of fine effects in cameo and color, and he is himself a professor of the fine art of producing them."

Rev. N. M. Mann, of Rochester, N. Y., brings another contribution to Biblical study, in a pamphlet just published under the title of "A Rational View of the Bible." It consists of five lectures on the date and origin of the various books of the Old Testament. Smaller than Mr. Chadwick's or Mr. Sunderland's book, it is yet an excellent statement of the results of the new criticism, in the author's well-known clear and pointed style. Mr. Mann generally follows Dr. Kuenen's views, but shows his usual originality in the presentation of them. The arguments are strong, the story very interesting.

The rational view, in the author's opinion, brings benefit rather than harm to the Bible. The notion of its supernatural origin was unjust to the book, putting it "under obligation to speak always in the tone of a God," and forcing it to be misinterpreted, in order that Genesis may "be kept abreast the latest deductions of geology." The longer this method is pursued the worse it will be for the book." But the rational theory of its origin quickens the interest in the work, and makes it take "on a purely human quality which quite atones for all the mistakes it contains. We read it as the record of a people's highest life, a book unique and yet natural as any in the world; a book in which are many discordant voices, as in every congress of strong and ardent minds." The rational view also aids religion. "The teaching that the Bible alone is God's word has tended to foster a feeling that Divinity had removed out of speaking distance for the last eighteen hundred years. On the contrary, the breaking down of this exclusive claim for old-time inspiration, and the assertion that the sole essential quality of God's word is *truth*, bring the Eternal Presence into instant communication with every pure spirit."

The book can be obtained for fifty cents by addressing Mr. Mann at Rochester, and is well worth the price. Sold also at the office of UNITY.

The growth of Sunday Schools in Chicago, noticed in our last issue, through an error of proof reading, appears as "since 1876." Unfortunately the report is no longer at hand, and we cannot correct the date, but it is not *that*.

NATURAL RELIGION.

A LETTER TO A FRIEND.*

QUINCY, Ill., April 27, 1877.

DEAR C.:—It is twenty-four days since the date of your letter to me, yet I am truly far from neglecting you in thought or deed. This morning I devote to you. I wish that I could see you. I wish that I could talk with you—not once, but many times and for a long season. I sympathize profoundly with your feelings and your struggles. If I could see you and have a series of conferences with you, with some reading and instruction in the New Testament, I feel sure that I could show you "a more excellent way," that would make your pathway all luminous, and fill your heart with light and joy. Writing is a sad limitation when heart and soul are overflowing with desire to aid and comfort, and with things of faith and trust and belief to utter also, if only I could get as close to your difficulties and needs as conversation would enable me to do. But I will write as best I can, guiding myself by your questions.

You ask me if I do not agree with you, that your thinking and striving and calling yourself a Christian, and trying to be faithful to the name, can have done you no harm, even if you have been laboring under the "wrong impressions." Certainly I agree with you, and I think that nothing that is earnest, true, sincere, prayerful, and faithful in spirit, can be of any harm to any of God's children, even if they make mistakes and errors in their opinions. The mistakes will be corrected some time—the errors will be discovered and rectified—but the earnestness and sincerity for the truth will go on the same all the time; and on such disposition of heart God smiles. Do n't you think it would be a strange thing, if God gave us minds to think with, and then, when we have done our best with effort and with prayer and with sincere love of truth, to find

*This letter is given without revision,—as it was written and sent, except that a few sentences of purely personal interest have been omitted. J. V. B.

the right view and right way, he should then make it harmful to us, or punish us if, being imperfect, we fail in our efforts in some things, and err or make mistakes? You would not treat a child so. And the Father of infinite love is more patient and more loving than you.

You say, "I want you to tell me what you believe, simply, if that is possible and won't take too long—and how it is that you can feel so happy without any hope in Jesus."

I will try to tell you:

I believe in God.

I believe he is Infinite Spirit, perfect in goodness, in power, in love, in truth.

I believe that he rules all things "with the glory of a Father."

I believe that he has made the sun to rule by day and the moon by night, and rules over the stars and planets in their courses "with the glory of a Father."

I believe that he opens his hand and satisfies the need of every living thing; that he hears the young ravens when they cry, and gives the young lions their food; that not a sparrow falls to the ground without him; and that he rules over all the helpless animals "with the glory of a Father."

I believe that we are his human children, that he loves us with infinite tenderness, that the very hairs of our heads are numbered by him, that he watches over us by day and night, that he shields us and guides us in wonderful ways every day, that when we are tempted we may look up to him and be strengthened and saved from evil, and that he rules over our in-comings and out-goings "with the glory of a Father."

I believe that, in his wisdom and the perfection of his being, it seemed best and perhaps necessary that all created things should be imperfect, because God alone can be perfection; that, accordingly, the earth started imperfect, "without form and void," unable to support life; that for countless ages it has been cooling and taking shape, gradually and slowly growing better and more beautiful, forming oceans and continents, laying one belt after another of firm foundations, by cooling the rocks from their fiery masses, or depositing sand and lime and earth from the waters; that by these belts or strata the present form and face of the earth was gradually builded up; that they still remain, and that, by digging down into the earth in suitable places, we may see these belts and perceive by what slow degrees and wonderful ways God made the earth; that the explanation and description of these strata, and of the earth's growth as revealed in them, is called geology; that they show that millions of years must have passed in this growth, while God lived and worked with divine knowledge of the best, and therefore the only way, until at last the earth was made ready for life, and plants and animals and man were made.

I believe that living things also, like the earth, started in low and imperfect forms.

I believe that the plants were at first coarse and rough, gigantic and repulsive, but grew more refined and beautiful, until they became as sweet and delicate as we find them now; and that this is proved by finding these huge, coarse plants, many of which got caught in rocks, or in deposits from the waters, and became petrified, and have lasted in the earth till now, showing us the forms of the early plants.

I believe that the animals were at first coarse, rough, gigantic, and repulsive, but gradually grew refined and beautiful, till they became as we see them now; and that they, too, still exist in fossil or petrified condition, and that even, sometimes, their huge bones have been found to teach us what forms the early animals had.

I believe that man, too, started imperfect, physically, mentally, and morally.

I believe that man started imperfect *physically;* that he began in a low, repulsive, savage condition, ugly, with a small head and inferior brain; that he has been thousands and thousands of years growing gradually better and more beautiful and more erect in body; and that this is shown by human remains found in some of the ancient belts or strata, and by many other physical proofs.

I believe that man started imperfect *mentally;* that at first he knew little and could know little—subsisted on poor and wild food—worshipped only idols of wood or stone—had no tools, no inventions—lived in caves; that gradually he improved, like all else in nature, until, after countless ages, he is the glorious creature of mind and intelligence that now we behold him, with a pure and spiritual worship of the unseen Most High.

I believe that man started imperfect *morally;* that at first he was fierce, animal-like—cruel, treacherous, selfish, sensual, greedy; that gradually he has grown better, more refined, gentle, kind, spiritual, loving, truthful, devout, as we see him now; and this has been the slow growth of countless ages of laboring life.

I believe that, through all these ages, while the earth was growing fit for life, and then the plants and animals were growing fit to live in it, and then man was growing up from a wretched savage to a spiritual stature, God never deserted his work, but "worketh hitherto," and was in all the changes and

growths, and governed and lived in all, and ruled over all "with the glory of a Father."

I believe that he is in all things, supporting and upholding them; that he is the life of all life, the power of all growth, the strength of all progress, the spirit of all good, and that without his being and presence there could be no change and no improvement, nor could anything exist at all.

I believe that not only through all these countless years, but that even in the few thousand years during which we can trace back the history of mankind, we see great changes for the better, vast improvement in mind and morals in the average level of mankind, and a tendency to grow all the time; and that, in all this human history, God is working by great, far-reaching laws, some of which we are learning to understand a little, but many more of which are inscrutable, and so will ever be; that he is in and of it all, inspiring, aiding, helping, checking, ordering, and ruling over all.

I believe that, from time to time, throughout human history, God has raised up great and pure souls to be witnesses of himself and ministers of his Word to the world; that he has raised them up, not as by any miracle or supernatural display of power, but naturally, by some great rising or development of that perfect providence which is always working to make all souls great and good, and, by the obedience of his children to his laws, brings forth still nobler children to praise him and bless the earth.

I believe that Buddha, Socrates, Paul, John Huss, and many others, have been raised up to witness of God to the world.

I believe that Jesus was so raised up and inspired to be a witness of God to the world,—to be a minister of his Word,—to teach men a more spiritual religion and a better way than he found them walking in.

I believe he was a great prophet, akin to other great prophets among the Hebrews, but richer, deeper, higher, gentler, larger, more free, grander, and more wonderful in his vision of the unseen and eternal than any that I am able to compare him with.

I believe that, for this reason, he impressed the world profoundly, regenerated it with new life and spiritual force, poured forth a new and spiritual religion, and forever inspires and aids the soul to walk in the way of a high and pure life.

I believe that God stood close to Jesus, inspired and taught him, filled his soul with the great thoughts and feelings that he uttered, and upheld and supported him to the end.

I believe that God also, in like manner, inspired the other great prophets of the Bible.

I believe also that God in like manner inspired the prophets of every race who have witnessed of him by pure lives and faithful deaths and by spiritual teaching.

I believe that God inspired and supported Buddha when he set out upon his wanderings, to teach a deeper and purer religion to the people.

I believe that God inspired Socrates, when he taught the Athenian youth the simple, inward life of honesty and virtue, and that God supported Socrates when he preferred death to violation of the voice which he declared spoke in his soul.

I believe that, at Constance, God inspired and supported John Huss, when he calmly entered the flames rather than equivocate or deny what he believed to be the truth.

I believe that God's inspiration is waiting at the soul of each one of his children; that the same immediate inspiration of the Infinite Spirit which the prophets have had and Jesus had, is open to all; that the inspiration which made these teachers so good, is striving at all hearts to lift them up to goodness.

I believe that these great men were exceptional men, who, by reason of some excellencies or obediences to the laws of God in their ancestors, were born with very great minds, quick of intelligence and insight and reason, and that the inspiration of God, flowing into such spirits, lifted them to their great heights of power and illumination; but I believe, also, that the same inspiring Spirit of God waits and enters to lift up and illumine every soul, according to its measure and capacity, and that whatever soul is true to such sight as it has and follows it with piety, will grow more and more open to inspiration, and receive continually more light, and grow up into higher peace, joy, and assurance.

I believe that Jesus was a man; and therefore in him God shows us what our true humanity is; and, since Jesus was a man, I believe in the possibility of a divine manhood for all men.

I believe in the future life.

I believe that there, as well as here, the self-same laws govern; that it is a state of everlasting progress; that we shall live in an order which will open up to us great vistas of truth and knowledge, wonders of experience, and sublime heights of virtue, toward which it will be our duty and our celestial joy and life to aspire and strive evermore.

I believe that God will help us there as he does here; that he will stand close beside us to inspire,

uplift, and strengthen; that he has framed laws of life and society there, which will surround his children with aid and comfort and joy; and that he rules over it all "with the glory of a Father."

I believe that God is infinitely merciful and tender and forgiving; that he "pities us like as a father pitieth his children;" that "he knoweth our frame, and remembereth that we are dust;" and that he wills that "not one of his little ones shall perish."

I believe that no one will be punished forever, or banished from before the face of God; that we are all his children; that the most wicked person is his child just as much as the best person; that he loves the bad, the wayward, the wandering; that he loves them with the infinite tenderness of the all-Father, more than our human hearts can conceive of or our human love imagine; that it is impossible for his love and goodness to condemn any one of his children to endless pain and loss; that he punishes by his perfect providence and ever-working laws, but not endlessly; that he seeks evermore to redeem the wicked; that his love will not give up any one; and that his power is equal to reclaiming all at last, and will do so, and he will rule over all "with the glory of a Father."

I believe that, if but one sheep be lost, the good shepherd leaves the ninety-nine to seek after the one that is lost, and, when he has found it, he rejoices more over that one which he has saved, than over the ninety-nine which went not astray, and needed no reclaiming.

I believe that it is impossible, because contrary to the justice and love of God, that we imperfect creatures can be condemned to any fixed state forever for what we may be or do in this little short life.

I believe that, when we die, we enter there just as we leave here, and go right on, with new opportunities and new helps to aid us to pray to God for strength; and that no one can be so bad as to stop the still small voice in his soul, and that some time he will hear it and try to return; and I believe that the instant he begins to try, God is by his side to help, to save, to bless, to heal.

I believe that all wrongs are punished, both here and hereafter, in very many ways; and that the instant a wrong is done, it is judged and condemned by God, and is sure to end in destruction and defeat, however prosperous it may seem at first; and that every righteous thing is blessed and hallowed, and is sure to end in life and victory, however defenseless and trodden-down it may appear at first.

I believe that nothing can separate me from the love of God, "neither life nor death, nor height nor depth, nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor any other creature," nor my own sins and errors—from the love of God, which is not only revealed in Jesus, but in my own heart, in all the wonderful guidance of his hand in the history of mankind, in all the good and pure and great who have witnessed of him everywhere, and to which my own soul responds and testifies.

*[I believe that the Universe is a realm of perfect order; that this Earth and all the spheres that fill the starry heavens, move on their way according to laws which are never broken; that all motions and changes on this earth-surface, and on all the planets and stars, go on according to laws which are never broken; that nothing supernatural ever overcomes the holy majesty of nature; that what is sometimes called the supernatural is really the preternatural, and cannot exist; that no miracles ever invade the perfect work of law; that all is one severe, secure, invincible, unbroken, divine order.

I believe that the worship or religion of mankind, as it gradually unfolded in the soul, established different forms, rites, creeds and principles, which became institutions and religions; that these religions took their form and substance in part from human nature which is the same all the world over, in part from the peculiar traits and character of the race that developed them, and in part from the particular circumstances and conditions of the time in which they arose; that Buddhism, Brahminism, Zoroastrianism, Greek, Roman and Norse mythology, Druidism, Mohammedanism, are illustrations of such historical religions; and that all such historical religions, proceeding in part from what is immutable and universal in human nature, and in part from special traits of race or conditions of time, are in part true and permanent, in part erroneous and transitory.

I believe that Christianity is one among these historical religions; that it is the most high, noble and complete among them; that it began in an epoch of unusual grandeur and in a character and life of great depth, power and holiness; that it is more true, more wide, more rational, more beautiful, more uplifting, strengthening and life-giving to the enlightened spirit, than any other; that, however, in its forms, books, doctrines, rites and character as a historical religion, it has its limitations,

*The following nine paragraphs between brackets make no part of the letter as originally sent; but neither are they written to be added *now*. I will include them for reasons some of which are obvious. J. V. B.

and must have, because it is founded, like all others, in part on the immutable and universal in human nature and in part on the peculiar character of the race and time in which it arose; and that, therefore, it has great and inspiring elements which will last forever, and also partial and transitory elements which will pass away.

I believe that religion is wider than, and inclusive of, all forms and names of historical religions; and that no person should profess any form as the be-all and end-all, or take any name as a limitation of either the sympathies of his heart or the inquiries of his mind.

I believe that many religions in their process of development, have created books which are held sacred by them, containing their records, history, credentials, poetry and precepts.

I believe that the Koran, the sacred hymns of India and others, are such books.

I believe that the Bible is such a book, divided in two parts, the Old Testament being the sacred books of the Jews, the New Testament the sacred writings of Christianity.

I believe that these books, like the religions which produced them, contain much that is true, universal and imperishable, and much also that is erroneous, partial and transitory.

I believe that these books should be read reverently on the one hand, in freedom on the other; that they should not be allowed to rule over the mind or limit the feelings or harden religion into forms and creeds; that they should not be endowed with authority over reason; that they should be interpreted according to the canons of language and historical criticism, and that, whatever their meaning, they must be judged continually by the human spirit as it grows clearer, more intelligent and more devout with the lapse of time; that whatever is a hindrance will be outgrown and left behind, and whatever is good will be preserved to nourish natural religion in the soul.]

Thus, my dear friend, I have endeavored to sketch for you, quite frankly, the outline of my belief. It is called "NATURAL RELIGION," and comes from God, as all natural things do, and blooms in the human soul by the breath of his Spirit, just as a flower rises out of the earth. It is planted by God in the human soul. It is the spirit's natural remembrance of its Father. It begins when the most degraded savage bows before his idol, with the dim instinct to worship, and goes on growing better, clearer, more spiritual, until it flowers into divine power and beauty in such a soul as Jesus.

Now I will try to answer some of your special inquiries. You say you believe "there cannot be a person who has not some good in him, and, if we all have good, it seems we must be followers of Christ; then we are Christians. That seems a very broad meaning, though, doesn't it?" To this I answer, Yes, it is broad, but not so broad as the loving-kindness of God. If you are following afar off, you are just as much in the army as if deemed worthy to march in the leading ranks. Now all are following a little. One man may be wicked, dishonest, intemperate, profane, but he may love his little child and be kind to it. To that extent he is following. Another may be harsh, savage, fierce, sensual, but scorn to take a pin that is not his own. To that extent he is following. "We've all our angel side," and it is this side that keeps striving with us, and one day will be victorious and thrust out the evil, because it is the good side and has the help and blessing of God. You say, "Do you believe there will be persons lost finally—say a few?" No; I think, sooner or later, every soul will cry to God, and a broken and a contrite spirit he will not refuse. The parable of the Prodigal Son contains my view of salvation. On this point, let me ask you to turn to Whittier's "Tent on the Beach," and read the poem of Piero Luca, the porter of the Pitti Palace. Read it more than once, and ponder over it.

You say, "If God has infinite power, why is it that Satan leads so many far from him? Does God permit it to be so?" Dear C., *there is no devil*, whether you call him Satan, or by any other name. If in this earth "we've all our angel side," why not also everywhere? Would it not be strange, if here there is a spark of good even in the worst, but in some other part of God's dominions there should be creatures totally evil, without any ray of good at all? I believe there is no creature anywhere but has his angel side; and a being with an angel side cannot be a devil. You are troubled to know how God can permit Satan to mislead people. But do you not see that the devil himself is the most incomprehensible evil? Why does God permit him to exist? He does not permit it. There is no Satan; and in the universe in which God rules "with the glory of a Father," a creature of absolute, irredeemable blackness is an impossibility.

I believe I have answered now all your questions as fully and frankly as possible in a letter. I have not written hastily. I have thought much about you. I yearn with my whole heart toward you, my former dear pupil, as I yearn toward all of that little flock of children, though so many now have

grown up to manhood and womanhood, like yourself. I wish earnestly to be of service to you. I ask you to read what I have written, not once only, but more than once. Turn not away hastily from any point that may trouble you. Think of it, ponder it well. You owe so much to me, to yourself, to the truth.

Before closing, I want to notice one or two points in your letter, in regard to which I wish to give you some cautions. You say, "After looking over some parts of the Bible, I could not conscientiously say that I believed in every part of it." I want to caution you on the subject of the use of the Bible. No book, to my mind, is so grand, so beautiful, so full of wonderful penetration into the unseen things of God, so rich in precious words to help our faith and quicken us to noble life. But it is also true that no book has so many pitfalls for the unwary or the ignorant, or for those who go to it, as most people do, not to help them to find out what is true, but to find ways or texts to prove that some special opinion or doctrine is true. Now I will tell you some reasons why the Bible is such a difficult book to use and to understand, and why it is sometimes dangerous in ignorant hands:

1. You know it is written in a foreign language; not only so, but in dead languages—that is, those no longer spoken. The Old Testament is written in Hebrew; the New Testament is written in Greek. Of course, they were composed long before there was any printing, and the first copies were manuscripts, and so they were for many hundred years. Now these manuscripts do not agree among themselves. In a particular passage, many of them will read one way, many of them another way. There are about one hundred thousand passages in the New Testament alone in which the old manuscripts differ in the words; so that it is a work of great learning and labor to say what the text of the New Testament really is; and in many passages the best scholars differ in their judgment, and no one can feel any confidence whether such a passage should have one Greek word, as it is in one manuscript, or another Greek word, as it is in another manuscript. Now, perhaps you will be told that these discrepancies are very trifling and do not affect any matters of doctrine. This is true in part, but is not altogether true. In many cases, the decision in favor of one word or another makes a great difference in what the passage teaches. Take down your Bible and open to the 1st Epistle of John, 5th chapter, 7th verse; there you will see a passage about the three heavenly witnesses. This passage is an entire interpolation. It does not belong in the New Testament at all, and is not found in a single old manuscript. Nobody knows how or by whom it crept into the text, and to tell you the remarkable story of how it got into *our* Testament would take too long here. The most orthodox scholars agree that it is no part of the Bible. Yet you will find plenty of ignorant people, and even people who ought to know better, still quoting that text, and relying upon it to prove the Trinity. But, besides all this, what these hundred thousand uncertainties *do prove incontestably* is, that you are quite right when you say you use your mind in regard to the Bible, and cannot believe some parts of it; because, if the Bible was intended to require our implicit belief, and to give us certain knowledge of truth, I think we may be sure that God would not have left it to fall into such a host of uncertainties as to the very words of it. But this is not all; for the New Testament has to be translated into English before you can read it, and the translation which we commonly use was made long ago, before they understood the New Testament Greek as well as they do now; and, although it is very beautiful for its fine old English, it is a very bad translation indeed as a rendering of the Greek, and as full of errors and mistranslations as it can hold, affecting the meaning of numberless passages in important ways. You will see, therefore, how much caution you must use before taking any passage to prove anything, or allowing it to affect your mind.

2. The Bible is made up of books written by many different hands, and the writers often disagree with each other. There are important discrepancies between the Gospels that cannot be reconciled. Then there is the great disagreement or quarrel that stands out in the New Testament. No doubt you have read the New Testament a great deal. Now, did you ever, in your reading, notice anything of Paul's quarrel with Peter and his party? Did anybody ever teach you anything about it? Yet you have no doubt read faithfully over and over again, passages which cannot be understood at all, without a knowledge of that quarrel; and yet you supposed you understood them, because you gave some meaning to them which perhups the words might be made to bear, but which was not at all in the mind of Paul when he wrote them, and is very different from what he meant.

3. Most important of all, however, is the fact that the Bible is such an old book. Suppose that two thousand years hereafter, some one should find somewhere a newspaper published in Boston to-day, and that he knew nothing whatever about the history of our time, about the state of society now

existing in Boston, etc. How much do you think he would understand that newspaper? Suppose that, in place of a newspaper, he found a private letter, or even a public letter, written by some representative to his constituents, and all the finder knew was the name of the writer and the name of the person or persons it was written to, but nothing of the condition or circumstances of either party. How much do you think he would understand of that letter? Now that is precisely the case with Paul's Epistles. They are simply letters written for special purposes to certain persons. How are you to understand them, if you know very little about Paul and nothing about the people to whom he wrote? I know you will meet with persons who will tell you that, to a believing soul, the Bible is easy, that he that runs may read, etc. Believe it not. Distrust all such talk. It is simple ignorance. If any man says it in the pulpit, it is still nothing but ignorance. The ideas which these "believing souls" start with came out of the Bible by ignorance at first, and of course it is easy to find them there again by ignorance. But that is not wise reading, nor faithful reading, nor conscientious reading. When a great scholar recently published a Life of Jesus, he said he had deveted twenty-five years to a study of the history of the times, the state and condition of society, etc., etc., and to the Gospels as related to the epoch in which they appeared, to qualify himself to write about that wonderful and beautiful life. Does not that seem greater, more worthy, more reverential, more worshipful, than the flippant and ignorant ease with which most persons talk of Jesus and of the Gospels? But you will ask me, Is the Bible worse off in this respect than any other ancient book? It is more difficult than some, because we know less about the first century after Jesus than we do of many other times; and it is more perilously situated than any other in one important respect: it is the only book of all ancient volumes on which the western world hangs its faith and religion, and this fact makes the difficulty which it shares with all antique books, and in which it exceeds very many, peculiarly dangerous.

I think now you will see the importance of the caution which I wish to give you about reading the Bible. I would not bid you not read it. It is full of passages which are so beautiful and elevating, so majestic and grand, so helpful and strengthening, that no one should lose them from his life or from his daily thoughts. Such are Isaiah XL., parts of LI. and LII., Pss. XXIII., XCI., CIII., CIV., the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus' Parables, and many other places. But I *do* wish to warn you not rashly to hang your faith or belief upon any passages which appear to assert this or that doctrine, or which uninstructed persons, or persons who take up the Bible o search for proof-texts, declare to teach this or that doctrine. It is not the right way to use the Bible—it is not a careful and conscientious way to read it. It is sure to lead to perplexity, misunderstanding, confusion, and unhappiness.

One other point I want to speak of, and then I will bid you good-bye. I have read your letter many times very carefully and pondered over it; and I will presume upon the privilege of your old teacher and minister and your friend, to refer to some indications which I discover in your letter of certain things in your disposition which I think you must guard against. You say you "have so many dear friends who are members of the orthodox church;" and again, that you "have been influenced very much toward the Baptist church in X.;" and again, that your talk "has all been, or, rather, the most of it has been, on one side." When I consider these passages and remember your gentleness of disposition and tenderness of heart—when I call to mind certain incidents that I remember of you long ago, and a certain shyness that I think I have observed in you toward older people, I cannot but think that you have used just the right word, and that you have been *influenced*. Consider how much it means, that almost all the conversation you have had, the sympathy you have sought, the advice you have taken, the pleading you have listened to, has been on one side. I fear that you are one who gets very tenderly attached to your friends, and that they have been able to work upon your susceptible mind, with sad results. The tender attachment is right—the surrender of mental poise to the gusts of feeling is wrong. But if it is influence, you say, Why could I not influence them as well as they influence me? Perhaps I might be able to answer that, if I knew your friends; but, in one way, I can see that any young person, brought up liberally, would be at a great disadvantage, when thrown suddenly and intimately, as you were, with companions of orthodox training. You were brought up to think for yourself. Your religious education was really just beginning, because your mind was just unfolding to such things; you were just beginning to learn, under my instruction, something of the history and nature of the Bible, and the great truths of natural religion; you were not supplied with a set creed, because it is not our way of education; and you had not attained knowledge to see and reason for yourself. Your companions had been trained very differently; they had been brought up from baby-

hood to believe certain things; they had recited them at their mothers' knees; as they grew up, they were told continually that they must hold this belief implicitly; that any doubt was wicked; that they must hold the creed on peril of eternal misery; that the devil was constantly trying to insinuate doubt into their minds, but that they must hold fast to their faith, in spite of him, so as to be saved; that to think and reason for themselves was sinful; they must take the teaching of the church. They were carefully instructed that the Bible teaches this creed, and made to get certain texts by heart, called proof-texts. Probably many were worked upon by revivals, and their tender natures excited, until, in an ecstasy, equally ignorant and sincere, they said they were converted, and joined the church. It is very plain to me that you would be sadly at the mercy of companions trained in that way. They would be positive—they would know just what they believed—they would not have the least doubt, nor be troubled with any reasoning—they would roll off the proof-texts volubly, and they would be full of zeal and earnestness and tenderness. You would have almost nothing to oppose to this, because you were never taught to believe implicitly without knowledge or reason, and your knowledge and reason were only just opening. I ask you to look these facts plainly in the face; if I am right, weigh them, and discover whether they be not of great meaning and moment.

If you are faithful to the better way that I think I see stirring in your mind—the way of reason, of thought, of conscientious endeavor after a deeply-rooted and rational faith—you have a hard task before you, one of the hardest tasks that ever assails human constancy. It is the task of remaining in doubt. Alas! how few prove themselves capable of it! It is apt to be one of the highest and finest powers of noble minds. To endure a time of doubt, perhaps a prolonged time; to stand firm under the pain of uncertainty; to deliberate and strive, and still not see, and then deliberate and strive again, and yet again, meantime *trusting* that in the perfect providence of the Most High we shall find a way at last to a clear and blessed sight, and living in this trust, working in it, faithful to our very doubts, and honest with ourselves—this is great, noble, and deeply religious. Very few can do it—or, at least, very few aspire to it. The weak break down under it. But God knows our frame and remembereth what we are. Not for nothing do we endure the pain and accept the discipline. It is a service of the God of Truth. As Milton said in his blindness, "They also serve who only stand and wait." And when we find our way at last—when the vision of truth breaks upon our eyes, and a great and assured faith grows up in us—it is such a burst of light and joy and peace, as no tongue can utter. God grant to you such strength and trust to wait, and the joy and faith following.

Sincerely your friend,

J. Vila Blake.

TABLE TALK.

BY ROBERT COLLYER.

A writer in the *London World* went to hear Professor Jowett preach, just now in Oxford, and makes a capital report of the scene and the sermon. He notes how a smile of seraphic innocence made the preacher's face radiant as he sat in the pulpit, away above the eager and expectant crowd. The full, round head, and cherubic cheeks, that nestle in the comparts of a double chin—the twinkle of repressed irony in the preacher's eyes as he says the prayer for the good estate of Balliol College, of which he is master, and thanks God for the munificence of John de Balliol and Devoargilla his wife. Then he tells us how the best men in the Univesity were there, for the great editor of Plato is a man to be heard; and there is a special interest in this, that no human soul can guess whether he will launch out into some tremendous piece of radicalism or give you a pleasant talk all about the domestic virtues.

On this Sunday the sermon must have been radical enough for the most eager iconoclast who still loves the truth. The text was, "Neither shall they be persuaded though one rose from the dead." The argument that the history of Christianity is a story of perpetual change; dogmas have altered and outward forms lost their old meaning; so that, if we could conceive one man as having lived through all the years, he would have been principally employed in anathematizing himself. We of the present century have not the same feelings and views about Christianity as our fathers had, and the problem for us to solve is, how much Christianity ought we to retain and how much to give up. And this was the kernel and conclusion of the whole matter: That we are not to look for Christianity in the organization of the church or the ritual, for this is a sort of materialism; not in internal conviction, for in this there may be obvious delusion; not in miracles, for we have learnt to read history with new eyes, and should not believe a miracle if we saw one; and not in the historical statement,

for Jesus undoubtedly did not say all the words that are attributed to him; not in any of these things. "What, then, is Christianity?" the preacher asked, and answered, "*It is the ideal of one who went about doing good, and all the facts of science and history which are clear, certain, and true.*"

He threw his lance, too, with might and main, at the make-believes of the day, in the guise of a story. "Bishop Leighton was reviled once," he said, "for being an Episcopalian, when his father was a Presbyterian and his grandfather a Roman Catholic, and answered, 'Yes, sir; and my grandfather was the honestest man of the three.'" That must have been a sight worth seeing and a sermon worth hearing. Radicalism to the backbone, in the central citadel of English orthodoxy, with the best men in Oxford for hearers. Some of them, this writer says, looked as if they expected the benediction to stick in his throat, and some looked about them with a great pride, as if to say, the truth has been told this time anyhow. And we may surely thank God and take courage, when we think such sermons are possible where there is such rare need of them—so brave, and broad, and true.

It still seems hard to realize that Bayard Taylor has done his day's work down here and gone to his rest. It was my good fortune to spend some days with him, in a glancing sort of way, a year ago last November, and I do not know when I have met a man more thoroughly alive, from the center of the heart and brain to the tips of the fingers, than he was then. As you listened to his bright talk of his plans and purposes, you felt that, to his own mind certainly, the best lay still before him, and that what he had done so far was only in some sense getting ready, "a good ready," as we say, for what was still to come. We went with our friend, Mr. Fields, whose guests we were, to call on Richard H. Dana, and wish him joy on his ninety-first birthday. Mr. Taylor had written a notable paper in the New York *Tribune*, tracing the beautiful old age back to its spring, and touching its remote connections with the men of the old era, and this, with the visit, became a kind of text, I remember, a short time after, of the worth of a long life filled in, through and through, with the best work a man can do. He had the poem, Prince Dukalion, in hand then and almost done, read some passages from the manuscript, and told me how it was in his mind to write a series of poems which should trace the upward march of man through all the centuries, and be what one might call a psalm of degrees; and then crown these with one in which he would try to sing of his own faith in God and man. It was all said quietly and with a touch of humility, as if he felt he must wait on God for the fitting word. But he had seen the pattern of it all in the Mount, and felt a genuine hunger to make it good.

Then there was this new Life of Goethe—he must write that. He had been collecting materials for it and making studies, through many years. I confess I did not take kindly to this project, because it seemed as if his deep and true reverence for the man's genius would stand in the way of a right estimate of his character. His genius was superb, Margaret Fuller says, but his character was no match for it; and Parker says, "He was a selfish rogue, a great pagan; his theory of life was selfish, and the Christian was not in him." And whether Bayard Taylor could so have mastered his worship of the head of gold as to have told the grim truth about the feet of clay, and all that lay between, must be matter of serious doubt. Still, there it was dreaming in him, and working like new wine in the cask—a Life of Goethe, which should be right worthy of the man. His good wife was helping him to save money for this, he told me, that they might go to Germany after a while, and settle down until his book was written. And this is the money, so far as they had got it scraped together, by very hard work and close saving, the poor fellow spent in the service of our republic, to leave his widow destitute, and open the question, as she looks anxiously through the clouds of her sorrow toward us, whether we will leave her with the double desolation of poverty and bereavement.

So when I think of this eager, earnest soul, as it was here among us so lately, with aspirations and intentions reaching onward through the years to come, its swift translation touches me afresh to the faith that we are not unclothed but clothed upon, when we pass into the silence; or else, of all the waste the mind can conceive, this, that blots out such an intelligence in its fair and full prime, is the last and worst.

An English lady, who has just passed away, has given in benefactions to the Church of England, about $700,000, with her husband to help her.

Our brave little church in York has made grand use of a new school-house this winter, by giving a good breakfast Sunday mornings to a crowd of destitute people.

The good Princess Alice used to say that her creed contained only two articles—one from Plato, "It is better to suffer than to do an injury," and the Sermon on the Mount.

A London house is to bring out The Lives and Portraits of the One Hundred Greatest Men in History, in eight monthly volumes, folio. The portraits are to be reproductions from fine and rare steel engravings. The lives will be written by men of great eminence, and Mr. Emerson's name is mentioned as one of the writers.

The *Christian Life* notices the offer of the editors of UNITY to go out and lecture or preach, on condition that those who want such services will subscribe to our little venture, and thinks we shall have no such trouble as Dr. Parker struck, from whom we stole the idea. We do not expect to have any trouble, and forty-eight subscribers sent in their names to-day, in response to our offer, which is still open, and will be for some time to come.

The little jokelet from *Punch* about the old lady who could not think of turning vegetarian because she was brought up in the Free Kirk, and was not going to change her religion in her old age, reminds me of a story a gentleman told me in York last summer. How he met a man on the street the morning good old Mr. Welbeloved died, who said to him, "Have you heard the news? Mr. Welbeloved is dead." "The vegetarian?" "I never heard he was a vegetarian." Our friend answered, "Are you sure you are right?" "Quite sure," was the answer; "he was one of those people who do not believe in Jesus Christ, you know."

A NEW ORDINATION SERVICE.

A correspondent writes us the following account of Wm. C. Gannett's ordination at St. Paul, March 7: "Although ten years a minister and two years at St. Paul, Mr. Gannett had never been 'ordained.' But a week before, he asked his people to 'ordain' him and to all unite in doing so by renewing their bond of fellowship with each other. Accordingly on Sunday after sermon, he explained the agreement with a three times reading, that none might lightly act. Then the President of the Board of Trustees said an ordaining word, Mr. Jones welcomed him to the band of workers, and after service, the friends—about a hundred—came up, one by one, and signed their names below these words:

'As those who believe in religion,

As those who believe in Freedom, Fellowship and Character in religion,

As those who believe that the religious life means the thankful, trustful, loyal and helpful life.

And as those who believe that a church is a brotherhood of helpers wherein it is made easier to lead such a life,

We join ourselves together, name, hand and heart as memhers of Unity Church.'

In his explanation Mr. Gannett said that this was a 'creed,' but one made up not of the intellectual beliefs, but of the principles and ideals of our religion—a much deeper and wider and more lasting ground of sympathy. To those who had signed any previous statement, this was supplemental, not doing away with that; but new friends signing this were in no way committed to any older statement. Nor was the signing a pledge of financial support to Unity Church; but it *was* a pledge of *real* and *deep* interest in the church. No stranger, for instance, attracted for two or three Sundays, no friend even, who merely cared once in a while to drop in, heartily welcome as their presence was, should feel invited thus to join our fellowship. He thought it would be our *family book*, the register of those who felt that ours was their church *home*. The signing was and should be regarded as a solemn act; it was our way of 'joining the church,' but the 'church' joined was open to each and all whose life-ideals and principles these words expressed, and who cared to find their home with us. Once in three months he proposed that the book should be opened on the table by the pulpit and new signatures invited; and that an age be set, not younger probably than sixteen or seventeen years, at which our children should be encouraged to join their names to ours.

It all was simple, natural, and almost *too* tender and impressive to be told about in this way; but we hold the *Unity* circle to be our larger selves, and what has done us good may help others in it."

SERMONS ON THEIR MERIT.

Rev. J. L. Jones, of Janesville, Wis., has made a new departure among the clergy. Determined to have his church rest on sound business principles, he has with his usual boldness issued a circular announcing that "I have this day released the officers of All Souls' Church from all further responsibility as to my salary. Hereafter I will have no stated or assured income, but will trust to such support as my pulpit ministrations and general usefulness in Janesville will command. There will be no pew-renting or reserved seats in this church, no collection taken up, and no church *begging*. Annual tickets, good for a seat in any part of the church, will be sold for five dollars per year. Those not holding annual tickets will have an opportunity of leaving upon the table at the door *ten cents*, on entering or retiring, if they so desire. Friends will be requested to make their own change." Mr. Jones proceeds to give, among his reasons for this change, "that the present management of church finances is a reproach to religion and an offense to decent business morals. Debts are loosely contracted, and the revenue collected often by undignified means." His "salary shall not rest with undue weight upon the shoulders of the few over-willing supporters. Some such plan as this must be adopted in order to save the democracy of the church. I much desire that the church in which I preach shall be as congenial a home to the mechanic as to the capitalist. This I believe can be done by putting its privileges at an uniform rate and within reach of the poorest. I have no desire or need to remain in Janesville longer than my work is of sufficient value in the community to command a decent support on its own merits." We cannot but admire the boldness of the circular. At last accounts the plan was working well, and Mr. Jones had a fair prospect of being soon ready to lend money to his salaried brethren.

LIBERAL WORKERS.

J. Ll. Jones has prepared for the Sons of Temperance of Milton Junction, Wis., a programme of literary work for twelve evenings. It includes the study of various American authors and works, the discussion of various questions connected with temperance, all spiced with dramatic and other entertainments.

In an article on Tennyson, *London Truth* says: "In religion he may be described as a broad churchman—very broad—but with the keenest sense of the beauty of what our German cousins would call the Christian Mythus. Among the dearest of his personal friends was Frederick Maurice, who stood godfather to one of his boys."

Rev. J. L. Douthitt, of Shelbyville, Ill., has published a pamphlet on "The Creeds or Christ; Which do You Believe? A Plea for Religious Honesty." He reviews the Confessions of Faith of the various churches, and finds, of course, many doctrines which the modern preacher professes on ordination day, and then straightway forgetteth them.

Rev. O. Clute has been giving a course of scientific lectures at Algona, Ill. A local paper says they were "received with a degree of interest and enthusiasm which is seldom accorded to any speaker by our somewhat undemonstrative people. We have heard only expressions of the warmest approval and admiration of the manner and spirit of these eloquent lectures."

The *Register*, of Spencer, Iowa, reports that Rev. J. R. Effinger, of Des Moines, recently lectured there Saturday evening and twice on Sunday. The people there were so pleased with a preacher who "is an earnest advocate of a rational, practical religion, and pleads for a greater purity and manliness in life, and less of the cowardly clinging to the skirts of another," that they appointed a committee to consider a plan for regular service and church organization, and are trying to make arrangements for Mr. Effinger to speak there once a month.

Dr. Heywood, of Louisville, lately preached a sermon on "The Sabbath and Humanity," reported at length in the *Courier-Journal*. He vigorously presented the view, now held by all scholars, that the Hebrew Sabbath was originally no gloomy but a joyous day. "It was made for humanity, not humanity for it. It was humane, tenderly humane, in its origin, a rest-day for the poor, the weary, and the over-burdened, and not for man only, but also for the beasts that toil for him and do his bidding." Dr. Heywood reminded his hearers that Proudhon, though an extreme radical, still has argued in the name of health and public morality, for six days of labor and one of rest.

R. H. writes that "on Feb. 16th, Rev. J. Andrew installed himself over the Unitarian society of Keokuk, Iowa. He believes in the competency and right of ministers and societies to determine their own relations without let or hindrance, or help from any outside ecclesiastical authorities. So he offered his own prayer and did his own preaching for his installation. The freedom, frankness, and independence of the discourse, were its prominent features, and they must have struck the congregation as a wide departure from the general cautiousness and circumlocution of the pulpit. Mr. Andrew combines with ability a freedom from the trammels of tradition and authority. His style is full of freshness, points, and vitality."

The editor of the *Glencoe Register*, Minn., is named Liberty Hall, and sounds like one. In a long editorial, he criticises a minister who has been preaching there that "infidelity and immorality are inseparable," and says, on the other hand, "superstition and immorality are the two vagrant tramps that have from the beginning been seen hand in hand stalking down through the ages." He says ninety-five per cent. of the convicts in the State Prison at Stillwater, are "firm believers in the doctrines taught by the church." He boldly declares that much of the church attendance is "to gain and hold position in society," and that the "cross at the threshold of the church long since disappeared, and in its place he who enters finds suspended a mantle of respectability, with which he is covered as he could never have covered himself." Recognizing the great amount of sincere worship and good work in the church, he yet "asks the church to recognize the fact that a man can be honest, patriotic, humane, and possessed of all the virtues called Christian, without being a worshiper of the hideous effigy of a God too often set up in our orthodox sanctuaries." Evidently this editor has good quality in his subscription list, or a better quality in himself which can overlook the subscription list.

Dr. Bartol, in a paper on Dr. Channing, recently read in Boston, said "Dr. Channing was short, slender, in weight not over 100 pounds; but he stood high in the pulpit. People who went to see him found him cold. He was without ambition, and read no notices of himself in the reviews. Profane language cut him to the heart. He had atmosphere, but no airs. The humorous element was not wanting in him; it was outgrown. He wrote and rewrote to the third time what he had to say, to make it more true."

C. W. Wendte has furnished a notice of Dr. Heywood's new book, "The Unitarian Banner," which we have no room for, this time.

CORRESPONDENCE.

To the Editor of Unity:

May I correct an error in the "Notes from Cambridge and Boston" of Feb. 15th?

The Christian Unity Society, which established evening schools of the higher grades in Boston, was not Mr. Savage's, but an organization, now independent, but originating in and at the time connected with the South Congregational Church (Mr. Hale's.) Mr. Savage's is the "Church of the Unity."

Yours respectfully, M. H. Brooks.

Boston, Feb. 25, 1879.

DEVOTIONAL READINGS.

BY F. L. HOSMER.

THE CHURCH UNIVERSAL.

Her priests are all God's faithful sons,
To serve the world raised up;
The pure in heart her baptized ones—
Love, her communion cup.

The truth is her prophetic gift,
The soul her sacred page;
And feet on mercy's errand swift
Do make her pilgrimage.

Samuel Longfellow.

I believe in the communion of saints.

"Apostles' Creed."

From heart to heart, from creed to creed,
The hidden river runs,
It quickens all the ages down,
It binds the sires to sons—
The stream of Faith, whose source is God,
Whose sound the sound of prayer,
Whose meadows are the holy lives
Upspringing everywhere.

W. C. Gannett.

Wherever through the ages rise
The altars of self-sacrifice,
Where love its arms has opened wide,
Or man for man has nobly died,
I see the same white wings outspread
That hovered o'er the Master's head.
Up from undated time they come,
The martyr souls of heathendom,
And to his cross and passion bring
Their fellowship of suffering.

Whittier.

The paths to God are more in number than
The breathings of created beings;
The doers of good shall reach me through
This religion for ever and ever.

From the Persian.

And so we come near to the beautiful truths and testimonies that rise out of this pure religion and undefiled. . . . They are pure truth, justice, love—highest, noblest, finest instincts of the human heart and mind. . . . If these pure principles have their place in us and are brought forth by faithfulness, by obedience, into practice, the difficulties and doubts that we may have to surmount will be easily conquered. There will be a Power higher than these. Let it be called the Great Spirit of the Indian, the Quaker "inward light" of George Fox, or Brahma, the Hindoo's God—they will all be one, and there will come to be such a faith and such liberty as shall redeem the world.

Lucretia Mott.

All the faiths have one root, like all the mountains, shooting from one bulb. Father Taylor, seeing a half-dozen white martin-boxes of churches in a country town, said, "You have war here!" But, like hunters or explorers scattering their forces to find the same game or gold, every sect adores one Spirit, whether by Quaker dumbness, Methodist shouting, or Romish cross. . . . No word suffices for the thought; so we use many, as a surveyor uses his triangular series for a measure. When *love*, repeated and overworked, sounds sentimental, we say *truth;* and *Allah* is refreshing when *God* has become trite.

C. A. Bartol.

All real unity is manifold. Feelings in themselves identical find countless forms of expression. In the East, men take off their sandals in devotion; we exactly reverse the procedure, and uncover the head. The Oriental prostrates himself in the dust before his sovereign; even before his God the Briton only kneels. Yet, would it not be idle to ask which is the essential and proper form of reverence? Is not true reverence in all cases modified by the individualities of temperament and education? Should we not say, in all these forms worketh one and the same spirit of reverence?

F. W. Robertson.

KHUSRAÜ'S PRAYER.

O Thou, the cool shade at the door of weariness,
Even the wicked are panting for Thee.
A drop of the rain of Thy compassion
Cleanses me from all my blackness.
Do Thou accept me with Thy children,
O Thou, my God, and the God of all!
Show us the road, that we may reach Thy door,
O Thou towards whom is the way of all men!
Our days Thou increasest beyond measure;
Thy mercy purifies us from all sins;
Khusrau with Thee seeks refuge,
O Thou my shade and the shade of all.

From the Persian, 13th Century.

Children of men! the unseen Power, whose eye
For ever doth accompany mankind,
Hath looked on no religion scornfully
That men did ever find.

Which has not taught weak wills how much they can!
Which has not fallen on the dry heart like rain!
Which has not cried to sunk, self-weary man,
Thou must be born again!

Children of men! not that your age excel
In pride of life the ages of your sires,
But that *ye* think clear, feel deep, bear fruit well,
The Friend of man desires.

Matthew Arnold.

SERIES II. **HOME LIFE.** LESSON 12.

BY MRS. SUSAN I. LESLEY AND MRS. ELIZABETH L. HEAD.

THE CAT AND DOG.

"The merciful man is merciful to his beast."

A last word. We cannot conclude our series of Home Lessons without a word for the Cat and Dog, which complete the family circle.

Our Duty to them. They should receive love, protection and care. In taking them into our homes, we should guarantee them not only food and shelter, but freedom from persecution. Remember that though not sharers in our highest joys, their capacity for suffering is as acute as our own, and they bear it more patiently. Learn to think what is likely to be the effect of your actions upon them.

Respect their rights and feelings. If the cat wishes to lie quiet, do not insist upon having a game with her, or pulling her about. Make pets of the lower animals but not *playthings*. They are sensitive beings like yourselves. Use your power as a *delegated trust*, remembering that to them we represent God, whose chain of benevolence reaches the humblest.

Wanton cruelty is less frequent than the *heedless cruelty* resulting from thoughtlessness, or neglect. Be systematic and considerate in providing them with food and drink. (Cats and dogs often suffer terribly from thirst in cold weather when the ground is frozen.) This will put an element of order into your own life.

Why? A full grown dog, or horse, is a more rational animal than a month-old baby; why should we worry, frighten, or tantalize the one more than the other?

Ages of unkindness to the lower animals have given them a habit of fear. Generous boys and girls of the nineteenth century will be ashamed of this, and strive to win their confidence. Who needs to ask the character of a child from whom the cat shrinks, and the dog runs?

Their good qualities are deepened by affectionate intercourse with human beings; a kindly treated dog no more resembles its beaten and starved brother, than a well trained child resembles the desperate little street beggar, who feels himself an outcast from love and goodness.* There are no limits to the possible improvement of either.

Other Animals. Do not confine your tenderness to the *domestic animals*. It is as bad to set a dog on a hare, as to worry a cat. Fishing and hunting for the mere pleasure of killing, are brutalizing amusements which will one day be classed with the cruel sports of the past,—bull and cock fighting, etc.

"Never pass by on the other side." Prevent wrong to the helpless.

Improvement of Morals. Tender and thoughtful care for animals is special training and education to our best instincts. Consideration for them, and for one's kind, go together, and the transition is easy from tormenting them, to tormenting fellow creatures.

Out of seven thousand children educated in an industrial school where Humanity to Animals was made a specialty, not one has been accused of a criminal offense up the the present time. Seeds of cruelty are worked out by gentleness and justice towards creatures so dependent, and habits of order and perseverance grow from regular performance of the duties necessary to their comfort.—E. L. H.

*For illustrations, see "Natural History Scrap Book" and Animal Life in Europe.

SERIES II. **HOME LIFE.** LESSON 11.

BY MRS. SUSAN I. LESLEY AND MRS. ELIZABETH L. HEAD.

THE POORER.

Lord of himself, though not of lands,
He having nothing, yet hath all.—Sir Henry Wotton.

The Problem. In all well-to-do families are the *poorer*, the *dependents*, the *servants*. How should you regard them?

Class Prejudices. In the first place, never think of them as belonging to *a class*, and attribute to them the sentiments and views of *a class*, but think of them *as individuals*, with their special traits and characteristics, needing careful insight and study. It is as unjust and absurd to say or to think, "*Servants* always feel so or so, or think in this or that way," as it would be to say, "*Ladies* always do this or that," or "Merchants always look at such and such things from one point of view."

As servants, carefully train them for their duties, not only for the family comfort, but also, because in so doing you are fitting them for one of the most honorable and useful professions in life, and one by which their livings are secure. *Exact faithfulness of them* in their duties. But treat them with the same *consideration* and *sympathy* and Christian *politeness* which you show *all* your friends. As members of your family circle, their well-being and interests should be more sacred to you than those of outsiders. It is trying to see how many persons will find fault with a waiter, *in the presence* of a whole family, or a party of guests, for some slight dereliction, thus calling attention to it; or who make allusions to acts of carelessness or stupidity as if the servants had none of that sensitiveness which is common to the whole human family. Find fault when it is right to do so, but always "*between thee and him alone.*"

Duties to the Poorer. Try to lift them to all the improvement and enjoyment you can. Do not think that they can live *wholly* in their work, and *without amusements*. This is unnatural, especially in the young. But do what you can to refine their pleasures. Take them sometimes, or send them on *day excursions* to pleasant places, or let them now and then hear *good music*. Encourage them to read good, or instructive, or entertaining books. *Show an interest in them.* Study their *habits* and *tastes*. Lead them gently and kindly to habits of *forethought*, if they have them not. Induce them to save some portion of their wages, to raise them above want hereafter.

Labor and Capital. When rich and poor come into a closer common understanding of each other, through mutual services of Love and Friendliness, the sad questions which trouble us to-day will cease. The rich will make such use of their riches as to produce *the highest justice* and the *widest benefit*. The poor growing wiser will find out that all their troubles do not grow out of low wages, but come from complicated laws of political economy, for which the rich capitalist is not *wholly* responsible.

The faithful Servant. Consider the influence of such an one in a household. They *give far more than they receive*. Read the lives of noble servants, of the noble poor. Read the life of Louise Schepler, the servant of Oberlin. "*He that is greatest among you, let him be as him that serveth.*"—S. I. L.

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